



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Patent and Trademark Office

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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
08/920,433	08/29/97	ROSENTHAL	43-97-001

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**DOCKETED**

EXAMINER

CRECCA, M

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2765

2

DATE MAILED: 03/23/99

6/23/99

*Amendment Due:*  
*June 23, 1999*

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

**RECEIVED**

MAY 08 2006

Technology Center 2100

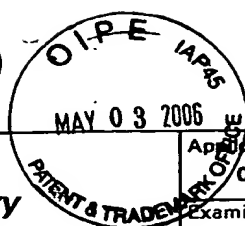
MAR 20 1999

Docket ☒ Wrapper ☒

RVF Docketed ☐

Reference(s) ☐

**Office Action Summary**



Application No.  
**08/920,433**

Applicant(s)

**Rosenthal, K.A.**

Examiner

**Michele S. Crecca**

Group Art Unit

**2765**



☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Aug 29, 1997

☐ This action is **FINAL**.

☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

**Disposition of Claims**

☒ Claim(s) 1-15 **RECEIVED** is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) MAY 08 2006 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

☒ Claim(s) 1-15 **Technology Center 2100** is/are rejected.

☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

☒ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.

☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some\* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been  
☐ received.

☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\*Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

**Attachment(s)**

☒ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

— SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES —

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**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-2, 7-9 and 13-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Howell et al. (U.S. 5,276,901).

Claim 1: Howell et al. teaches a method for "providing access privileges to records of members of a community" (title and abstract) comprising the steps of:

"...assigning and generating relationships of a member of a community..." (col. 5, lines 38-42);

" automatically providing access privileges to the to the records of the member based on the relationship..."(col. 6, lines 50-52);

"storing additional assignments...and during pendency of the additional assignment, automatically providing...disparate access privileges" (col. 4, lines 26-47, and claim 1 (col. 7), note: "disparate access privileges" are determined by the various access levels provided for in the reference).

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Claim 2: "...limited access privileges to records..." (col. 4, lines 40-45, note: by designating "clearance levels" the system "limits access privileges" to records).

Claim 7: Howell et al. teaches a "method of storing relationships between members of a community" (col. 6, lines 50-52, "user has an affiliation with another user") comprising:

"storing a first assignment...to a first position...storing a second assignment....storing a third assignment..."(col. 3, lines 25-37).

Claim 8: the method further comprising the step of "automatically providing the first manager position with at least a portion of the access privileges..." (col. 4, lines 40-45, note: by designating "clearance levels" the system can provide a "portion of the access privileges" to records and see fig. 4).

Claim 9: the method further comprising "automatically providing the first manager position with full access privileges" (col. 4, lines 40-45, note: by designating "clearance levels" the system can provide a "full access privileges" to records and see fig. 4).

Claim 13: Howell et al. teaches a "system for providing access privileges to records" (title and abstract) comprising:

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"a plurality of allowed types of assignments of members of a community..." (col. 2, lines 27-33);

"a record of assignments..." (Fig. 2, note: the general user of the "access control list" records the assignments of each user to each record);

"disparate access privileges..." (col. 4, lines 26-47, and claim 1 (col. 7)).

Claim 14: "allowed assignments include assignments between positions" (col. 6, lines 50-52, the "affiliations" determine which positions are "allowed").

Claim 15: "temporary relationships are associated with limited access privileges" (figs. 2 and 4, note: access privileges can be assigned and reassigned, allowing for the use of the assignments for "temporary relationships").

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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4. Claims 3-6 and 10-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Howell et al. as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Meyer (HRMagazine article "Visual guidance system steers Windows-based HRIS", Feb. 1994).

Howell et al. teach a method for "providing access privileges to records" (title and abstract) as rejected in claims 1 and 7 above, however, Howell et al. does not specifically recite the use of providing access privileges in a human resources management environment (specifically for the management of "administrative records" and "personnel records" for "employees" as recited in claims 3-6 and 10-12).

Meyer's article does discuss the application of computer methods to the human resources management environment and specifically addresses the use of "access privileges" (numbered paragraph 12 of the article). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to combine the method for providing access privileges to records into the human resources environment because the sensitive and private nature of human resources records makes access control a central issue. By controlling access privileges to records, the privacy of sensitive employee data can be guaranteed.

#### *Conclusion*

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

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U.S. patents by Fabbio (5,335,346), Dauerer et al. (5,469,576), Baker et al. (5,678,041), Thuraisingham et al. (5,694,590), Deo (5,720,033), Parker et al. (5,729,734), and Schaefer et al. (5,826,268) are included for the applicant's information. In addition, U.S. patent by Bass et al. (5,870,733) teaches a method and system for providing access to data based on associations between managers and accessors.

Two 1994 articles on the problem of protecting human resources records and access privileges have been provided, along with an additional reference on FLX Corp.'s Visual HR and two articles describing a related product, "Employeease."

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michele Crecca whose telephone number is (703) 305-0438. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Friday from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Allen MacDonald, can be reached at (703) 305-9708.

The fax number for Formal or Official faxes to Technology Center 2700 is (703) 308-9051 or 9052. Draft or Informal faxes for this Art Unit can be submitted to (703) 308-5357.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.


MSC

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March 15, 1999



ALLEN R. MACDONALD  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER